

REMARKS

The following remarks are provided in response to the Office Action dated March 31, 2004 in which the Examiner:

- rejected claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 4,282,407 to Stiefel in view of United States Patent No. 3,902,017 to Steward.

The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above referenced patent application in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw all rejections.

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stiefel in view of Steward. For at least the foregoing reasons the applicant traverses the Examiner's rejection.

A *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. §103 requires, among other criteria, that “. . . the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest **all** the claim limitations.” (emphasis added) (See M.P.E.P. 706.02(j) and 2143.03). To overcome a §103(a) rejection, the applicant must only demonstrate that the cited prior art document or documents fail individually and in combination to teach or suggest one element or limitation present in the claim.

The salient portion of currently amended independent claim 1 recites:

. . . **a flip-flop to capture a reversal of polarity of said voltage.**
(emphasis added)

Currently amended independent claims 6 and 9 recite a similar limitation. Claim 4 is

herein canceled.

The Examiner asserts that column 11, lines 33-50 and column 12, lines 8-28 of Stiefel teach a latch to capture a reversal of polarity. The applicant respectfully disagrees. Column 11, lines 33-50 discuss the operation of, among other elements, NAND gates 301-303, 311, 313, and 314 operating as threshold detectors based on the polarity-indicating signal 125. Column 12, lines 8-28 discuss the operation of, among other elements, inverters 341 and 347, and NAND gates 304, 316, and 348. The applicant respectfully affirms that the cited lines and corresponding Figure 7 of Stiefel fail to disclose the feedback or cross-coupling required to construct a flip-flop as a basic memory element from NAND gates, inverters, or combinations thereof as recited by currently amended independent claims 1, 6, and 9. The applicant therefore respectfully asserts that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness as currently amended independent claims 1, 6, and 9 contain at least an element not taught by Stiefel. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner allow currently amended independent claims 1, 6, and 9. The applicant further requests that the Examiner allow dependent claims 2-3, 5, 7-8, and 10-16 as each depends on a patentable independent claim.

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, the applicant submits that he has overcome the Examiner's rejections and that he has the right to claim the invention as set forth in the listed claims. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is believed that such contact would further the examination of the present application.

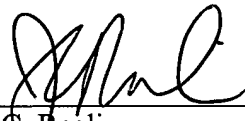
Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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6/30/04

Dated



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